

The Umbrella

K-3

Written and Illustrated by Jan Brett

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Spoken Arts - 9705

Story Summary

Carlos walks into the cloud forest with his green umbrella, where the only sound is the steady drip of drops falling from trees. Carlos hopes that he will see lots of animals...perhaps a toucan, kinkajou, tapir or a monkey. He leaves his umbrella on the ground and climbs up a tree for a better look. While Carlos is looking for animals from the top of the tree, many interesting things are happening in his umbrella on the ground!

Objectives

1. Develop an understanding of the environmental qualities of a cloud forest.
2. Develop an understanding of the diverse forms of wildlife that inhabit the cloud forest.

Before viewing the video

This book is inspired by Jan Brett's visit to the Monteverde Cloud Forest in Costa Rica. For more information and nature lessons about cloud forests on the web, visit www.cloudforestalive.org. Tell the children to be aware of all of the colors they will see in this video. The colors of the cloud forest and the colors of the animals that live there are very much alike. How is it helpful to animals when they blend in with their environment? Ask the children to look at the umbrella on the cover of the book. As they watch the video, they should think about how this umbrella that Carlos made blends in with the rest of the cloud forest.

Questions to ask after viewing the video

1. Which animals does Carlos hope to see in the cloud forest?
2. What is the only sound that Carlos can hear in the cloud forest?
3. Why does Carlos climb up the giant fig tree?
4. What do the different animals like about the umbrella?
5. What does the umbrella look like to you as it is on the ground of the cloud forest?
6. The umbrella is getting very crowded. Why are the animals being nice to the jaguar when he jumps in?
7. What happens when hummingbird, the tiniest of all, jumps into the umbrella?
8. What is Carlos doing during all of this time?
9. The tree frog is the happiest of all at the end. Why do you think he is happy?

Activities

1. Look at the colors of the cloud forest. Draw your own cloud forest. See if you can make your cloud forest animals difficult to find in your drawing.
2. Draw and cut animal figures like the ones we met in ***The Umbrella***. Display these figures against a background of leaf cutouts.
3. Refer to a map to locate Costa Rica. If information is available about the Monteverde Cloud Forest, discuss the climate, vegetation, animals and insects.
4. Have the children work in small groups. Ask each group to select and research one of the animals they read about in ***The Umbrella***. They will tell the class what they have learned about this animal.